

PSAS Study Team

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[midwifery.ubc.ca/research/psas/](https://midwifery.ubc.ca/research/psas)

**Information for Recruitment Sites**

**Background**

Pregnancy-Specific Anxiety (PSA) is defined as nervousness about the baby and mother’s health, the healthcare system, and social and financial issues in the context of pregnancy, childbirth, and parenting. It is accompanied by excessive worry and somatic symptoms.

**Research Purpose**

There is a need for a well-developed scale to measure PSA as existing scales are limited. The purpose of this project is to develop a valid and reliable measure, the Pregnancy Specific Anxiety Scale (PSAS).

**Previous Phases**

In Phase 1, we developed the PSAS based on interviews, literature reviews, and the advice of clinical experts.

In Phase 2, we recruited 494 women to test the PSAS. Participants identified unnecessary items on the scale. We examined the extent to which a score on the PSAS predicts birth outcomes.

**Phase 3 Recruitment**

We will evaluate the reliability and validity of the PSAS in measuring PSA and predicting birth outcomes. We will also examine the association between PSAS scores and other mental health disorder symptoms.

We hope to recruit 300 participants at any stage of their pregnancy, aged 19 years or older, with a BC Services Card or CareCard. Participants should be willing to attend an in-person or over-the-phone interview as well as complete online surveys before and after giving birth.

**Significance**

Pregnancy-Specific Anxiety can influence the developing fetus and perinatal outcomes for mother and baby. We hope that the PSAS can contribute to identifying PSA earlier, allowing for more timely interventions. Recent initiatives across Canada have focused on embedding mental health services into primary care practice. Creating an instrument that does not require specialized training to administer can provide healthcare providers with a quick and easy screening method and improve prenatal care for women.